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Garnet Lewis: Trailblazer

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Join The Conversation @ PrideSource.com

COVER
4 Garnet Lewis: Trailblazer

NEWS
4 Garnet Lewis: Trailblazer
6 HRC Releases Findings of 2018 National Survey of LGBTQ Teens
7 Author and Former Detroiter Carl Mitchell Dies at 86
10 MI Civil Rights Commission Takes Action on Anti-LGBTQ Discrimination
10 Affirmations Board Elects 6 New Members, 3 Step Down
11 Religious Discrimination Puts Millions of LGBT Elders at Risk
12 Bipartisan Amendment Introduced Against Trump's Trans Military Ban
13 SBA Restores Website Info for LGBT-Owned Businesses
13 LGBTQ State Legislative Candidates Win Big in Pennsylvania, Oregon, Idaho
24 Calling Together Community
24 New Collaborative to Support LGBTQ

OPINION
8 Parting Glances
8 BTL Editorial
9 Creep of the Week: Matt Barber

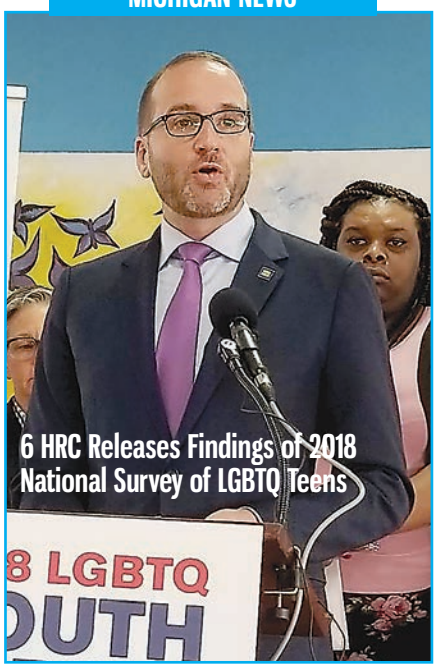
LIFE
14 Dishin' with the Girls of 'Casa valentina'
16 Screen Queen: Oscars at Home
18 Cool Cities: Ann Arbor
20 Happenings
23 Puzzle and Crossword

ENTERTAINMENT

14 Dishin' with the Girls of 'Casa Valentina'

Straight, White-Collar Men Escape Families and Dress as Women in JET Drama

MICHIGAN NEWS



6 HRC Releases Findings of 2018 National Survey of LGBTQ Teens

NATIONAL

12 Bipartisan Amendment Introduced Against Trump's Trans Military Ban

HAPPENINGS

20 Best of LGBT Events

MICHIGAN NEWS

10 Affirmations Board Elects 6 New Members, 3 Step Down

VOLUNTEER

Volunteering Opportunities Available at Prides throughout Michigan

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People of Color

Garnet Lewis faced a number of personal attacks during her 2008 campaign. Gary Glenn, president of the American Family Association, and current representative for the 98th House District, was responsible for airing homophobic ads, and a later attack occurred via media release when Lewis was elected chair of the Saginaw County Democratic Party in 2010. His favorite taunt was to refer to Lewis as a "homosexual activist."

Garnet Lewis: Trailblazer

BY ELLEN SHANNA KNOPPOW

"Honesty. Integrity. A Voice for You"
garnetlewisforstatesenate.com

When Between The Lines caught up with Garnet Lewis, Democratic candidate for Michigan's 26th State Senate District, she had just finished a campaign-related breakfast meeting at the Blue Star Café near Saugatuck. "It's wonderful, it's going very well," she said, when asked how her campaign was shaping up, having announced her candidacy in March.

"It's happening all across the state, but especially over here in west Michigan, which is known to be a little more conservative … certainly the energy and enthusiasm for Democratic candidates is absolutely wonderful," she said. "The fundraising's gotten off to a great start, so I couldn't ask for a better environment, really. I couldn't ask for a better year."

Dr. Lewis serves as chair of the City of Saugatuck Planning Commission and a is member of the City of Saugatuck Board of Review. She brings with her more than 25 years of professional experience in higher education, serving as the associate director for professional education at Central Michigan University and director of institutional research at Saginaw Valley State University. Currently semi-retired, she and spouse Vicky Cobb own and manage three commercial properties in Michigan.

Lewis seeks to replace term-limited Tonya Schuitmaker, a Republican now in the race for attorney general. Lewis is the lone Democrat in the field, and in November will face a Libertarian and one of three Republicans who have filed. Of those three is Bob Genetski, Allegan County clerk and former state representative, who recently attracted national attention for attacking the credibility of the students who survived the Parkland shooting. He's also known for his anti-LGBTQ voting record as state rep. In 2014, he co-sponsored Michigan's odious "Religious Freedom Restoration Act," which legalized discrimination, if in accordance with one's religious beliefs.

At 56, Lewis is not new to state politics. In 2008, she ran for state representative in the 98th House District, which included portions of Saginaw and Midland Counties. She won her primary but lost in the general election to Republican Jim Stamas. In 2014, Lewis made a run for the 32nd Senate District, but lost in the primary.

Called Out of Retirement

When Lewis and Cobb moved across the state to Saugatuck in 2015, they planned to retire. However, Donald Trump had other plans for her. When he was elected, everything changed.

"I told Vicky, the day after the election, I can't just sit here. I can't not do anything," she said.

So Lewis and Cobb headed to Washington, D.C. for the Women's March, which she called "a phenomenal experience ... amazing."

"As tragic as I think it is that Donald Trump's been elected, it's also been an extremely good thing for folks like myself and folks that were probably nonvoters in the past or chose not to show up for that election," she said. "It's a big wake up call."

Lewis explained that a notice was posted on her Facebook group asking for a good candidate for state senate. She and Cobb were up North, without internet access at the time, and was a little overwhelmed to return home and see the unanimous response: "Garn! Garn! Garn! Garn!"

At first, Lewis was reluctant to jump in the race. She was quick to remind her supporters that she had failed twice. But, perhaps they felt that the third time's the charm. In fact, one of her "gals" in Douglas, an Episcopalian priest, was quick to point out how many times Abraham Lincoln had run and lost. Finally, Lewis was persuaded.

"By that time, Vicky said, 'If you want to run, I'll support you,'" she said. "And that was it. I'm like, 'Alrighty then, let's do this!'"

The Issues

Due to the size of the 26th Senate District – Allegan County, Van Buren County, Kentwood City and Gaines Township in Kent County – the concerns of citizens are varied. But regardless of where Lewis asks, healthcare is right at the top. In Saugatuck and in South Haven, the environment is another focus, specifically, taking care of Lake Michigan, the Kalamazoo River and the watersheds, which are the main economic points for those areas. Education is on many people's minds, including the loss of school funding and asking teachers and administrators to do more with less. Finally, access to broadband is a big issue for the remote areas of the district, as it is imperative that students are able to do their schoolwork online.

Problem Solver

Achieving any progressive goals won't be easy, she acknowledges, as there are currently only 10 Democratic senators. As she points out, "that's enough to fit in a passenger van." Lewis sees herself as a problem solver. She recognizes the need to reach across the aisle and

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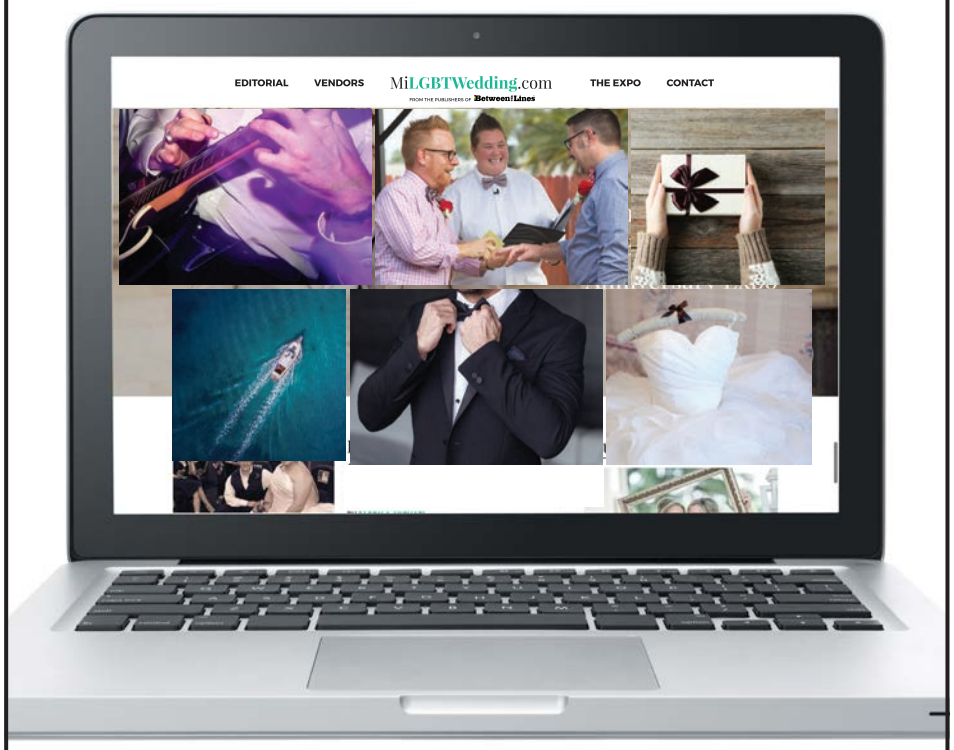

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Rep. Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) is among a bipartisan group of lawmakers seeking to amend a defense bill against Trump's trans military ban. (Washington Blade photo by Michael Key)

Bipartisan Amendment Introduced Against Trump's Trans Military Ban

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

A bipartisan group of lawmakers has proposed an amendment to major defense policy legislation that would abrogate President Trump's ban on transgender military service.

The amendment – introduced by Reps. Jackie Speier (D-Calif.), A. Donald McEachin (D-Va.), Susan Davis (D-Calif.) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) – was submitted before the House Rules Committee for consideration as part of the fiscal year 2018 defense authorization bill.

The House Rules Committee is set to consider amendments to the defense legislation on Monday and Tuesday. If the committee agrees to the amendment – a tall order for a committee stacked with Republicans – the House will debate and vote on the measure as part of floor consideration of the bill later this week.

The amendment seeks to enact transgender military policy that was in effect October 2016 – a time immediately after the Obama administration changed policy to allow transgender service – in addition to allowing accession of transgender recruits, which was set to begin in July. After President Trump's tweeted that month he's ban transgender people from the military "in any capacity," he issued a directive to the Pentagon prohibiting transgender service and reversing the Obama-era change.

A House Republican aide said "we have no illusion" the Rules Committee will make the amendment in order, but there are other intentions behind the amendment.

"We want to have positive amendments so that perhaps leadership is or will be discouraged from making anti-LGBT amendments in order," the aide said.

The House isn't the only chamber of Congress where lawmakers are taking action on transgender military ban. Last week, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) told the Washington Blade she intends to introduce a similar amendment against the policy to the Senate version of the defense bill.

Both Speier and Gilibrand have introduced standalone legislation against Trump's transgender military ban and vigorously questioned in committee Defense Secretary James Mattis about his recommendation to ban transgender service, which formed the basis for the policy reaffirmed in March.

It should be noted despite the transgender military ban and efforts from lawmakers to undo it, federal courts have ruled against the policy as a result of litigation filed by LGBT legal groups and transgender people are currently able to serve in the armed forces.

An anti-trans amendment is also before the House Rules Committee. Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa), an notoriously anti-LGBT lawmaker, has submitted a measure that would prohibit the authorization of U.S. government funds on "enforcing transgender sensitivity training."

This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.

SBA Restores Website Info for LGBT Owned Businesses

BY CHRIS JOHNSON

Following complaints from a leading LGBT business group and two House Democrats, the U.S. Small Business Administration has restored to its website material dedicated to LGBT-owned small businesses.

The new webpage on the SBA website, titled "LGBT-owned businesses," is found on the business guide section and says, "The SBA is proud to support the LGBT business community."

The page also lists contact information for SBA's LGBT small business team, provides information for certifying a business as LGBT-owned and lists six district offices – Greater Houston LGBT Chamber of Commerce, LGBT Detroit, Mid America Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, North Texas GLBT Chamber of Commerce, Nuestra Familia LGBT Puerto Rico and Wisconsin LGBT Chamber of Commerce – with strategic alliances with the LGBT community.

The National LGBT Chamber of Commerce, which called on the SBA to reinstate the LGBT page after it was deleted at the start of the Trump administration, hailed SBA Administrator Linda McMahon for the update in a statement from co-founders Justin Nelson and Chance Mitchell:

"The NGLCC is pleased to see the SBA reinstate LGBT entrepreneurial resources on their website, just days after the congressional letter was sent and a conversation between Administrator McMahon and myself was held," Nelson and Mitchell said. "Clearly she and the SBA recognize that LGBT business owners across the nation bring countless innovations, contribute over $1.7 trillion to the GDP, and create tens of thousands of jobs where they live. America's LGBT entrepreneurs, and in fact very diverse community, should be given unfettered access to opportunities to succeed at every level of government and in every marketplace."

The Washington Blade first reported in January 2017 the SBA deleted webpages dedicated to LGBT-owned small businesses. At the time, SBA officials said the information was removed as part of restructuring for the website at the start of the Trump administration, but the pages weren't restored for more than a year.

The issue gained renewed attention earlier this month after two House Democrats – Reps. Yvette Clarke (N.Y.) and Rep. Nydia Velázquez (N.Y.) – sent a letter to McMahon asking questions about the continued omission of the LGBT content.

The removal of LGBT information for U.S. government websites, including the White House website, has been a trend during the Trump administration. Although the SBA has restored its LGBT material, other websites haven't restored the LGBT-focused content in a meaningful way.

This article originally appeared in the Washington Blade and is made available in partnership with the National LGBT Media Association.

LGBTQ State Legislative Candidates Win Big in Pennsylvania, Oregon, Idaho

BY BTL STAFF

WASHINGTON – Pennsylvania candidates Malcolm Kenyatta and Kristin Seale are on track to make history after winning their primaries on Tuesday night. Malcolm will become the first openly LGBTQ person of color to serve in the Pennsylvania state legislature if elected in November, and Kristin Seale will become the first queer state legislator. Brian Sims, the first and only openly LGBTQ state legislator in Pennsylvania – won his race unopposed. Six of seven Victory Fund-endorsed candidates with primaries ton Tuesday, May 15, won their races.

"Representative Brian Sims has been our lone LGBTQ voice in the state legislature – standing up to bigoted colleagues and putting forward pro-equality legislation – but he won't be alone much longer," said Mayor Annise Parker, President & CEO of LGBTQ Victory Fund. "With tonight's victories, we are poised to triple the number of openly LGBTQ state legislators in Pennsylvania – an important step in moving equality forward in the state. While these out leaders will be champions for our community, their campaign platforms are about improving the lives of all Pennsylvanians. That is why they won tonight, and why they will win in November."

Malcolm Kenyatta was awarded "Spotlight" status by Victory Fund in April – a designation given to state or local candidates in history-making races.

Beyond Pennsylvania, three Victory-Fund endorsed incumbents won their primaries: Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Oregon state Rep. Karin Power and Idaho State Rep. John McCrostie.

More information about the organization and its history can be found at victoryfund.org.

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The girls of “Casa Valentina”: (top row) Joe Bailey, David Gram, Arthur Beer, Greg Trzaskoma; (bottom row) Vince Kelley, Ron Williams, Charles VanHoose. Photo: Ron Williams

Dishin’ with the Girls of ‘Casa Valentina’

Straight, White-Collar Men Escape Families and Dress as Women in JET Drama

BY DONALD V. CALAMIA

A story about the lives of women named Miranda, Bessie, Valentina, Charlotte, Gloria, Terry and Amy who meet regularly at their favorite vacation spot in the Catskills doesn’t sound like a terribly exciting play. But, how about if their real names are Jonathon, Albert, George, Isadore, Michael, Theodore and one simply referred to as The Judge? And what if their beloved resort is a secluded hideaway that caters to straight men who secretly love to dress as women?

That’s the far more entertaining spin Harvey Fierstein puts on his 2014 Tony Award-winning “Casa Valentina” that opens May 24 and runs through June 17 – but not at The Ringwald, where you’d likely expect to find it. Instead, the drama will take place on the stage of The Jewish Ensemble Theatre in West Bloomfield, although don’t be surprised if a couple of familiar Ringwald stalwarts are among the cast.

Among them is Joe Bailey, co-founder and artistic director of The Ringwald, who portrays Albert/Bessie, described in the script as “Willy Loman by day, Ethel Merman at night.” Nominated for an Encore Michigan Wilde Award more than a dozen times – many of which featured him in bright red lipstick and a dress – Bailey recently told BTL while on break from a rehearsal that the play “is set in 1962 at a resort in the Catskills, where heterosexual men can go and dress as women and live for a weekend or a week at a time completely free of prying eyes or outside interlopers, and just really be who they feel they really are.”

One weekend, however, their comfort zone gets tested.

“Someone shows up who has bigger ideas for this resort and for this organization to which they belong and tries to incorporate it as a non-profit organization,” Bailey said. “But that comes with strings attached.”

One of which is the risk of public exposure, something the characters work hard to prevent.

“We all have families,” explained Vince Kelley, another popular Ringwald regular who earned a 2016 Wilde Award for his dynamite, cross-dressing performance in “Heathers: The Musical,” who plays Michael/Gloria. “Joe has a nice lengthy bit about how he’s defined a balance with his wife and his children and everything. It’s all perfectly aligned, and how could you throw a wrench in that?” he said. “I have some lines about what would happen to my business. I think that today, you might be able to come out the other side of it, whereas back then there wasn’t an option. You would be risking absolutely everything.”

Indeed they would.

“Everything was so black and white in the past,” added Charles VanHoose, who plays one of the group’s elders, the sweet and silly Theodore/Terry. “Now it’s just millions of shades of gray. You’re talking transsexual, transvestite, cross-dressing, bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual; it’s just there’s so many different aspects other than just gay/straight.”

True. But for these characters, navigating the world of cross-dressing as married, heterosexual men is confusing and difficult enough.

“I mean, it just seems sad. It seems like (they were) trapped. It seems unfortunate that you can only be yourself under such very, very strict guidelines and rules and schedules and all that stuff,” said Kelley.

And that begs an answer to a very important question according to VanHoose.

“I find it a bit difficult to understand why a heterosexual man would want to dress as a woman,” said VanHoose. “I understand certain aspects of the smoothness of the cloth and all of that. Still, you kind of think, is there a little bit of gay (there)? Is there a gay

Hayley Kiyoko at St. Andrew's Hall

When she's not being hailed as lesbian Jesus, Hayley Kiyoko is simply a pop star. The 27-year-old Los Angeles native just released her first full-length album "Expectations" and is in the middle of a North American tour. Her Detroit stop will be at San Andrew's Hall in Detroit on Wednesday, June 6. More information can be found online at ticketmaster.com or saintandrewsdetroit.com.

Happenings

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OUTINGS

Thursday, May 24

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups 7 p.m. Oakland United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road,Farmington. 248-626-3620. oaklandumc.org. standwithtrans.org

Wednesday, May 30

Get Your People: The Role of White People in Ending Racism 6:30 p.m. 'Get Your People: The Role of White People in Ending Racism' is an interactive discussion and moderated panel on the role of white people in ending racism in metro Detroit and beyond. Birmingham Unitarian Church, 38651 Woodward Ave.,Bloomfield Hills. 248-647-2380 bucmi.org.

Friday, June 1

2nd Annual Ypsi Pride
6 to 10 p.m.
S. Washington St.
facebook.com/YpsiPride/

Catfight for the Crown
8 to 11 p.m.
Hosted by the Ruth Ellis Center
The Fillmore Detroit
2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit
Project Beautiful - Inside & Out, Catfight is an elaborate, "tongue in cheek" drag show "beauty" pageant that features amateur drag performers as contestants fighting for the title of Miss Kitty. ruthelliscenter.org

Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber Night at Comerica Park! 7 p.m. It's the Tiger vs Blue Jays at Comerica Park! Go to our website to buy tickets. Comerica Park, 2100 Woodward Ave.,Detroit. 313-962-4000 info@detroitlgbtchamber.com. mlb.com/tigers/ballpark. detroitlgbtchamber.com.

Ferndale Pride Birthday Weekend
Through June 3.
4 to 10 p.m.
Axle Brewing Co.
567 Livernois St., Ferndale
Expect new beers, a throwback food menu, outdoor beer drinking, raffles, giveaways and more.

Saturday, June 2

Ferndale Pride. 1 to 4 p.m. Since 2011, Ferndale has kicked off summer with its annual pride festival. Listed on the website After Ellen as a "Small City Pride That is Worth the Trip," Ferndale Pride draws more than 15,000 attendees for a full week of events leading up to Pride's premiere event the daylong street fair. facebook.com/ferndalepride.

Sunday, June 3

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups
6:30 p.m. Hilltop Counseling, 115 W. Maumee St.,Adrian. 313-909-5408. standwithtrans.org hilltopcounseling.org

A Drag Race Elaganza. Through Monday, June 4. To kick off Pride month, Slipstream offers a two-day only extravaganza of the community's favorite Drag Race stars. Celebrate Pride with the queens that own it. Slipstream Theatre. 460 Hilton Road, Ferndale. 313-986-9156 or insidetheslipstream@gmail.com. slipstreamti.com.

Tuesday, June 5

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups
7 p.m. St. Mary's In The Hills Episcopal Church, 2512 Joslyn Court,Lake Orion. 248-391-0663 stmarysinthehills.org. standwithtrans.org.

Ann Arbor Summer Festival 2018 Mainstage Lineup! 7:30 p.m. Passionate, provocative, and charming, the iconic singer/songwriter, activist, poet, and auteur Ani DiFranco returns to the territory that brought her to the world's attention backed by a full band. Power Center, 121 Fletcher Street,Ann Arbor. (734) 647-3327 info@a2sf.org info@a2sf.org. smtd.umich.edu.

Thursday, June 7

Safetalk Training 5 p.m. Hosted by American Indian Health and Family Services and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, safeTALK is a half-day alertness training that prepares anyone 15 or older, regardless of prior experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road,Ferndale. 248-398-7105.

Friday, June 8

Kalamazoo Pride. 6 p.m. This year marks Kalamazoo's 11th Annual Pride Event and the two-day festival will take place on Friday, June 8th and Saturday, June 9th. Arcadia Creek Festival Site, Kalamazoo. facebook.com/KalamazooPride.

Marianne Williamson's National "Love America" Tour 7 p.m. Historic Detroit Unity Temple is honored to have been selected as the first Michigan appearance for internationally acclaimed author and lecturer, Unity Temple, 17505 Second Ave.,Detroit. 313-945-4848 pegriffin@sbcglobal.net pegriffin@sbcglobal.net. detroitunity.com.

America The Beautiful: Songs from the Great American Songbook, and More! 7:30 p.m. An evening of male choral music paying tribute the vast array of music that is contained in the Great American Songbook. You'll enjoy a variety of American popular music from the last 100 years. First Presbyterian CHurch of Lansing, 510 West Ottawa St.,Lansing. lansingfirstpres.com. lansingout.org.

Saturday, June 9

Motor City Pride Festival. Motor City Pride is a volunteer run organization devoted to spreading awareness of the LGBTQ community through our community events. Hart Plaza, Detroit. motorcitypride.org

Drippin' In Denim 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Studio 51
1995 Woodbridge, Detroit
$10 before 10 p.m.; Geminis 1/2 off all night
Attire: Sexy denim, 21+
A Motor City Pride celebration of M. Diddy's birthday and Star Statuz Ent. 10-year reunion

11th Annual Pride Ball: "Magical Mischief" 7:30 p.m.
The Majestic Theater
4140 Woodward Ave., Detroit
Contact Keith at 313-446-9800 or khughes@miunified.org
statussexy.com/pride-ball
Free entry; Hosted by Unified - HIV Health & Beyond to bring greater visibility and strengthen the relationships with Ball Scene members to help guide them to obtain optimal health.

Kalamazoo Pride
2 p.m. Arcadia Creek Festival Site, Kalamazoo. facebook.com/KalamazooPride.

12th Annual Motor City "Bears in Speedos" Car Wash. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Level One Bank. 22635 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. The Bears will be washing cars, truck, bikes, scooters and even a roller blade or two. A portion of the proceeds to benefit the Ruth Ellis Center and Affirmations. facebook.com/motorcitybears.

Grosse Pointe Pride. 9:30 a.m. Grosse Pointe South High School. 11 Grosse Pointe Blvd., Grosse Pointe Farms. We GP's family friendly LGBTQA Pride March. There will be face painting, choirs, food trucks and a big banner to sign. We GP is sharing proceeds with the Ruth Ellis Center. facebook.com/gppride.

Sunday, June 10

Motor City Pride Festival and Parade. Hart Plaza, Detroit. motorcitypride.org

Monday, June 11

Stand with Trans 2018 Support Groups
6:30 p.m. Dakota High School, 2105.1 21 Mile Road,Macomb. 586-723-2700. chippewavalleyschools.org.

Thursday, June 14

Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce Merge & Mixer 6:30 p.m. Michigan Employee Resource Groups for Equality (MERGE) Monthly Networking Event. All are welcomed to network. Host by: Detroit Regional LGBT Chamber of Commerce. Check website for monthly location, RSVP is Required. Soho, 205 W. 9 Mile Road,Ferndale. 248-542-7646. info@detroitlgbtchamber.com. ferndalesoho.com. detroitlgbtchamber.com.

Editor's Pick

Garden Brunch by Greening of Detroit

Those interested in urban gardening can get excited for the upcoming Garden Brunch Fundraiser by the Greening of Detroit. The environmental group, dedicated to planting trees and environmentally-friendly job training for youth and adults around Detroit, is raising money for its Lafayette Greens Garden in the center of downtown. The event is on Sunday, June 3 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Lafayette Greens at 132 W. Lafayette Blvd. The event is held in partnership with MGM Grand. More information can be found online at eventbrite.com.

Editor's Pick

UMMA Showcases 'Aftermath: Landscapes of Devastation'

The University of Michigan Museum of Art is putting on a photography exhibit dedicated to examining devastating scenes from history in the past 150 years. The exhibit will show "landscape photographs made at the sites of natural or human-made disasters, capturing the results of destructive forces wrought on the land and its inhabitants," according to event descriptions. The goal is to serve as a reminder of how disaster can both tear apart and bring communities together. The exhibit runs through May 27. More information can be found online at umma.umich.edu.

MUSIC & MORE

Cinetopia Film Festival at Ann Arbor's Michigan Theater May 31, 7 p.m. Created for the people of southeastern Michigan, the Cinetopia Film Festival features the best feature-length dramas, comedies, and documentaries from the world's best film festivals (e.g. Sundance, Cannes, Venice, Toronto, Berlin, SXSW, Tribeca, etc.). Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St.,Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397 cinetopiafestival.org.

Barb Barton CD Release Concert June 1, 7:30 p.m. Come celebrate the release of Barb's seventh album and her newest book, Manoomin – The Story of Wild Rice in Michigan (MSU Press). MSU Community Music School, 4930 Hagadorn Rd,East Lansing. 517-484-1712. goldenrod.com. barbbarton.com/calender-of-events.html.

Om @ The Max June 3, 10:30 a.m. Practice yoga to live music by French composers. Certified yoga instructor and DSO Librarian Ethan Allen leads a group yoga session open to all skill levels — accompanied with music performed live by a DSO percussion ensemble. The Cube, 3711 Woodward Ave.,Detroit.

Brandi Carlile – In Concert June 9, 7:30 p.m. Brandi M. Carlile is a Grammy-nominated American folk rock and Americana singer-songwriter. The Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St.,Ann Arbor. 734-668-8397 michtheater.org/show/brandi-carlile

Ann Arbor Summer Festival 2018 Mainstage Lineup Continues! June 9, 8 p.m. It's all part of the saucy, vintage nouveau world of Postmodern Jukebox, a tongue-in-cheek musical project for all ages spearheaded by Scott Bradlee, a revered pianist and genius of song arrangement. Power Center, 121 Fletcher Street,Ann Arbor. 7 34-647-3327. info@a2sf.org info@a2sf.org. smtd.umich.edu.

Ann Arbor Summer Festival 2018 Mainstage Lineup Continues! June 10, 1 p.m. ACROBUFFO'S AIR PLAY: Fabrics dance, balloons have a mind of their own, confetti turns into the night sky, and a gorgeous canopy becomes a river of silk hovering over the audience in this modern circus. Power Center, 121 Fletcher Street,Ann Arbor. (734) 647-3327 info@a2sf.org.a2sf.org.

Sing Out Detroit Presents: Encore June 16, 7 p.m. Come Out and Support Sing Out Detroit Chorus as we celebrate 10 years of making music together. We will be performing some of our favorite songs and will be joined by chorus alumni. Ferndale High School, 881 Pinecrest Drive,Ferndale. 248-943-2411. eventbrite.com.

eVenti Verticali's Wanted June 19, 7:30 p.m. Aerial theater combines with video projections on a giant outdoor screen and concocts a mind-bending visual comedy extravaganza for all ages. Suspended in a world of animation, two Italian brothers hang from ropes and harnesses. Top of the Park, 915 E. Washington St.,Ann Arbor. 734-994-5999 info@a2sf.org info@a2sf.org. a2sf.org.

Sam Smith June 22, 8 p.m. Sam Smith's sophomore album, The Thrill Of It All, was released worldwide on November 3 via Capitol Records. In support, Smith announced the North American dates for "The Thrill Of It All Tour." Little Caesar's Arena, 2645 Woodward Avenue,Detroit. 3133495777

Ann Arbor Summer Festival 2018 Main Stage Lineup Continues! June 26, 6:30 p.m. AT THE ILLUSIONIST'S TABLE: Hosted by the world-renowned Scottish mentalist/storyteller Scott Silven, 22 strangers will share an elegant candlelit 3-course meal as mesmerizing illusions complement everything from the cocktails to the dessert course. Ann Arbor Club, 103 E. Liberty, 3rd Floor, Ste 300,Ann Arbor. 734-764-2538 info@a2sf.org info@a2sf.org a2sf.org/events/at-the-illusionists-table-1/

THEATER

Company. May 31 through June 11
8 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays & Mondays; 5 p.m. on June 3 & 10
The Ringwald Theatre
22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale
Tickets: $25 on Fridays & Saturdays; $20 on Sundays; $10 on Mondays
theringwald.com

All Childish Things: The Special Edition May 31-June 17, 7:30 p.m. In a galaxy far, far away (Cincinnati), the caper of the millennium is underway: the theft of millions of dollars of Star Wars merchandise and memorabilia. But even the best laid plans can go awry… Milan High School, 200 Big Red Dr.,Milan. 734-681-0112 info@roustabouttheatre.com info@roustabouttheatre.com roustabouttheatre.com roustabout.brownpapertickets.com

MRS. FIFTY BAKES A PIE by Linda Ramsay-Detherage – World Premiere June 1-24, 8 p.m. Stuck in an abusive marriage, a 1960s housewife stumbles into a dominatrix's session and discovers personal power. Bondage and baking mix in a twisted fantasy as her alter-ego "Mrs. Fifty" doles out the punishment. Theatre NOVA, 410 w Huron,Ann Arbor. 7346358450 theatrenova.org

Church & State by Jason Odell Williams June 8, 8 p.m. Just before his bid for re-election, and following a school shooting in his N.C. hometown, a U.S. senator (R) makes a comment that gets leaked, calling into question his stance on guns and God. Matrix Theatre Company, 2730 Bagley St.,Detroit. 313-967-0599 info@matrixtheatre.org info@matrixtheatre.org https:// matrixtheatre.org/ https://matrixtheatre.org/mainstage-season

Polyglot Theatre's Ants June 26-28, 4:30 p.m. Ants is an interactive roving performance which has giant ants bringing children together in a gentle and intriguing landscaping project. Gradually a world of meaning unfolds, illustrating the human desire for order. Top of the Park, 915 E. Washington St.,Ann Arbor. 734-994-5999 info@a2sf.org info@a2sf.org https://a2sf.org/category/top-of-the-park/ a2sf.org/events/polyglot-theatres-ants-1/

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Deep Inside Hollywood

BY ROMEO SAN VICENTE

John Cameron Mitchell's latest 'Anthem'

Here comes your next favorite podcast. Topic Studios, the people who produced "Missing Richard Simmons," recently announced that they're partnering with "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" creator John Cameron Mitchell for a new musical anthology podcast called "Anthem." The premise for the series will be neglected American stories, told by songwriters and storytellers working collaboratively, and that list of collaborators is impressive: Patti LuPone, Glenn Close, South African singer/songwriter Nakhane, Denis O'Hare, Laurie Anderson, Broadway star Simone (yes, the daughter of Nina Simone), Ben Foster, Justin Vivien Bond, Bridget Everett and Bryan Weller, who is currently working with Cameron Mitchell on the upcoming film "How to Talk to Girls at Parties." The first season, Anthem: Homunculus, will tell a single story in ten 30-minute podcasts, perfect for bingeing or that tedious commute home from work. The series is currently in production and will drop sometime later this year. Clear space on your playlist.

John Cameron Mitchell. Photo: Denis Makarenko

RuPaul to star alongside adorable orphan

On "RuPaul's Drag Race," the expression "She done already done had herses" might be something of a colloquialism-meets-a-non sequitur, but it has more or less come to mean that Ru's already done whatever you thought about doing and made money from it. And if you were thinking of starring in your own Netflix series about a drag queen who travels the country with a tough-talking orphan, then you can think twice about that one, too. RuPaul Charles will star in a new one-hour comedy series called "AJ and The Queen," co-produced by Ru and Michael Patrick King ("Sex and the City"). The Supermodel of The World will play against type as a down-on-her-luck queen traveling in a wheezing old RV with an unlikely child stowaway, performing in drag clubs all across this great drag-loving land, and teaching lessons about love along the way. She's going to sing in every episode, too, just like a one-drag-queen Partridge Family. Listen, we can't believe it's real either, but we're sure as hell going to watch. And that fascination factor is exactly how Miss Charles keeps getting hers(es).

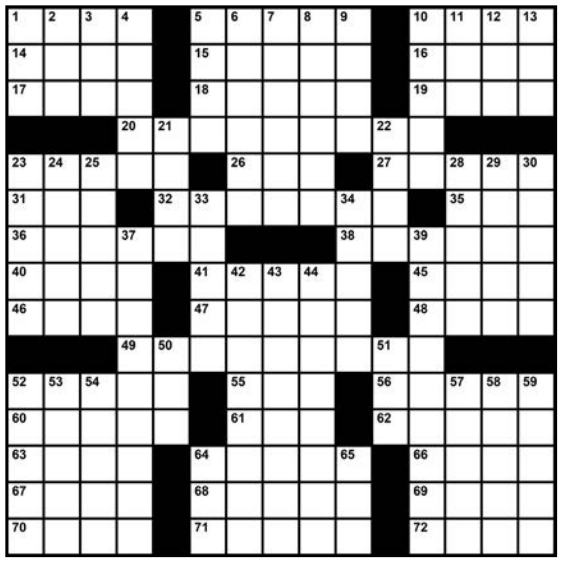
Ezra Miller says hello to 'Dali'

Ezra Miller, star of "Justice League," isn't sitting around waiting for the DC Cinematic Universe to keep his career afloat. He's no stranger to the arthouse world in films like "We Need to Talk About Kevin," and now he's signed on to the latest from director Mary Harron ("American Psycho"), the biopic "Dali Land." Miller will star in flashback sequences as the young Salvador Dali (Ben Kingsley will play the legendary artist as an older man) for a story set in New York and Spain in the early 1970s, and told from the perspective of a gallery assistant played by Frank Dillane ("Fear The Walking Dead"). "Phantom Thread" breakout star Lesley Manville will play Dali's formidable wife and Tim Roth the artist's best friend. Expect this one to kickoff big festivals when it's finished. In the meantime you can impress your friends by doing your surrealism homework, and then you can annoy them all by pedantically explaining what is and is not surreal in everyday life.

You'll probably want to live in the 'House of Cardin'

Directors P. David Ebersole and Todd Hughes of The Ebersole Hughes Company recently presented a work-in-progress trailer at Cannes for their authorized biographical documentary, "House of Cardin," and the worldwide rights were snapped up by France's Doc & Film. For fashion fans and, really for anyone who cares about how merchandising and status shifted gears after World War II, this is very good news. And if you're quite young and the question on your mind is "What is a Cardin?" then you're in for a dizzying education. Pierre Cardin, 95, French/Italian, gay, and still at work, is one of the 20th century's most influential designers. The man made clothes for everyone including astronauts; he put his stamp on perfume bottles and jets; he designed cars and cigarettes; he slapped his logo on his work before anyone else thought to do that, and he made so much money doing it that now he lives in a house that's shaped like bubbles (not making that up). You think your personal brand is something special? This guy invented the idea, so when the film is finally finished and streaming on a smartphone near you, pay your respects and let a queer legend take you to school.

Romeo San Vicente is still obsessed with the shape of that Cardin cologne bottle



Homophobes in the Cabinet

Q Puzzle

Across

1 Rainbow banner, e.g.
5 The Riddler, to Batman
10 "Kiss Me ___"
14 1993 title role for Kevin Kline
15 Loads
16 "To be," in Tours
17 Zinke, who pushed for LGBT discrimination in federal agencies
18 Words of compassion
19 Gorsuch, first Supreme Court appointment ever opposed by Lambda Legal
20 He compared being gay to being an alcoholic
23 Beyond ___ (condom brand)
26 Curve shape
27 Some musicians pluck them
31 Lumberjack's tool
32 "Gigi" author
35 Soho pub drink
36 Headwear for Otello
38 Like Shakespeare's feet
40 Additional
41 Ford of the '50s
45 "Yeah, sure"
46 Marsh of "South Park"
47 "___ you the clever one?"
48 Lip service?
49 Athens, in Socrates day
52 Disney film set in China
55 Country est. in 1948
56 Off to one side
60 Visitors at gay.com
61 Peeples of "Fame"
62 "Over my dead body!"
63 Bubble on a brew
64 "The ___ and the Ecstasy"
66 Evening, in ads
67 It comes before sum
68 Kind of cap
69 Grant in the cinematic field
70 Like an unbuttoned blouse
71 Recesses for Rev. Spahr
72 Mireille of "Big Love"

Down

1 New Deal prez
2 One-night-stand partner, crudely
3 Gardener on screen
4 Gay men's lifestyle magazine
5 "Gladiator," for example
6 Coin depicting Jefferson (but not 43-Down)
7 Run out
8 Like the guy with the tiniest hands
9 North Sea feeder
10 Obama birthplace, in a Trump smear
11 Stopped fasting
12 A little more than bi-
13 Long, slippery one
21 Peruvian of old
22 Daughter of Uranus
23 Satisfies fully
24 Rejoice
25 First lesbian magazine Vice ___
28 Steven Greenberg, for one
29 Ballet bends
30 Splinter groups
33 "___ at time!" (No threesomes!)
34 ___-Whirl (amusement park ride)
37 He associated homosexuality with bestiality
39 He said that marriage equality leads to "societal collapse"
42 Withering
43 Jeff, who voted against spousal benefits for same-sex couples
44 Bewitch
50 HMO concern
51 South Beach souvenir
52 Place to see Michelangelo's arte
53 Seize the throne of a queen, e.g.
54 Projection
57 Like "Sweet Bird of Youth"?
58 Fashionably nostalgic
59 "South Park"'s Parker, and others
64 Toothpaste box letters
65 Etheridge album "___, I Am"

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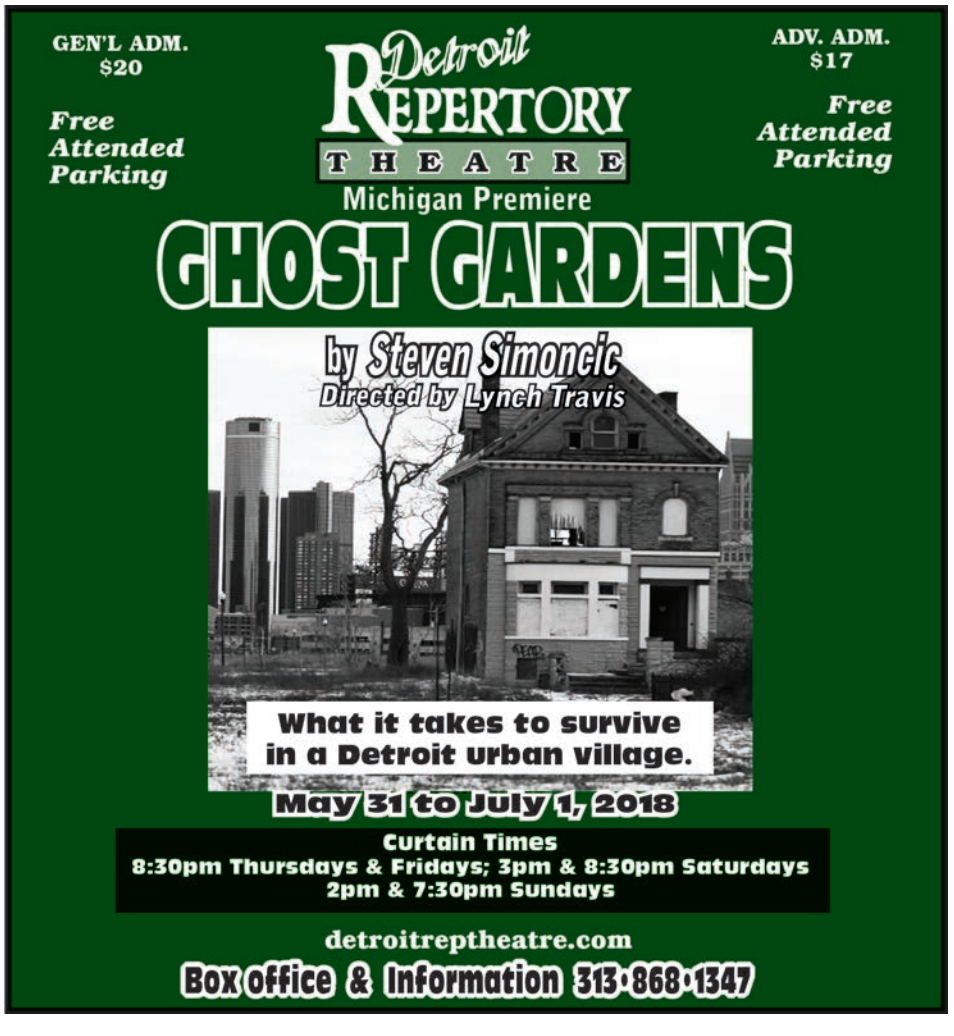

Calling Together Community

Detroit Lesbian Social Group Seeks Regular Meeting Space

Walk into a Queer Untitled meeting and you'll be surrounded by a variety of women, likely all from various walks of life. However, the unifying factor for most of the attendees is their sexuality. The monthly event co-founder, Candice Williams said that this is by no means accidental.

"In Philly they literally have a gayborhood. They literally have rainbow on the street and they have like a sidewalk with a rainbow on it, they have a naked bike ride, a dyke march, all kinds of cool stuff," Williams said. "I didn't see any of that here (in Detroit). I mean, you have Ferndale Pride, I went a couple of years ago, but I thought, 'OK, where am I at? Where are my people?'"

Originally from Southfield, Williams moved back to Detroit from a 12-year stint in Philadelphia three years ago when she learned that members of her family were ill. Upon arriving in her hometown, she said she felt a severe lack of cultural influence when it came to not only the Detroit LGBTQ community, but the black lesbian community.

"I was just looking for my people and I didn't find them. I was looking for my connections the same way I did on the east coast," Williams said.

She started to crave a unifying factor that would join many people together. It was after going to a few events around the city that mirrored her experiences on the east coast that Williams began to get inspired.

"One of my really, really best friends, her best firend is a filmmaker and she did a film called 'The Revival' and it's about doing poetry. She had an event at a café that's no longer there. We all came out and it was beautiful. It was all black women and we were supported. It was powerful," Williams said. "I was like, 'This woman came from out of town and she could bring all these women here!' She connected me to a lot of folks."

Those connections eventually helped Williams put on a 50-person Friendsmas aimed toward the black lesbian community, a New Year's Eve party and a variety bar meet-ups and parties around the city. And even with fluctuating numbers at each event, Williams decided the group she was helping to form needed a regular name. Williams said that Keri Roberts, a Detroit socialite that she met at one of these events, was instrumental in getting Queer Untitled off the ground and finding a solid brand for it.

"We didn't want to box anyone in. So, Keri was really part of that. We were just talking and brainstorming and trying to come up with the name in the first couple of meetings," Williams said. "We came up with Queer, Black and Melinanted. It was a bit too strong, and we then we started saying, 'We want it to be for us, by us, but we also wanted to be inclusive.'"

Thus, the "Untitled" portion of the name was added in.

"The whole idea was to take it from Detroit and create a flagship, perfect box and put it everywhere. It then became Queer Untitled. Hopefully, one day, it'll just become Untitled and it'll just be the part that you go to, because you know," Williams said. "So, Queer Untitled is inclusive, because what does queer mean? It doesn't mean you're a same-gender loving person, it means you're a bit different. We wanted to be inclusive for all folks. You don't have to identify as lesbian."

However, Williams said she doesn't want potential attendees to think that each event is just a regular party — although she said she hopes there will be many planned in the future. The events are aimed at welcoming a wide variety of people, so they too are just as varied.

"The premise behind Queer Untitled is, in a nutshell, exposure and cultural education. We want to expose our queer community to something different. So, I truly believe that exposure is the difference between the haves and have-nots and the dream chasers and the people that don't get to fulfill their potential," Williams said. "In addition to that, we wanted it to be fun, and, in addition to just drinking and partying, we wanted to have other stuff going on, so if you don't drink you still feel comfortable coming. And then we wanted to create a safe, healthy space. We wanted to incorporate food and music and all that kind of stuff."

And so far, Williams said that these regular groups — formerly weekly, now monthly — have been starting to fill that exposure gap. Although Queer Untitled is not the first event of its kind, its attendance seems to suggest that Detroit city proper definitely has room for events like these.

However, even as well as events have been going throughout the city, the one factor that Williams said could be improved is having a regular meeting space. Formerly, Williams was able to use her brother's bar space, but as that's no longer available, she said she needs to be proactive in finding something to replace it.

"Right now, we're still trying to find a venue to keep doing it and then still balancing my work life," Williams said. "There's so much separation and all I want to do is create a coffeeshop discussion and have community we can build and have a place that we can go, for us, by us."

After all, Williams lived in Philadelphia for a long time, a city which Gallup listed among the top 30 cities in the U.S. with the highest LGBTQ population. However, not far behind on that list is Detroit, too.

More information about Queer Untitled can be found via the group's instagram page @queeruntitled.

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New Collaborative to Support LGBTQ People of Color

LGBT Detroit has become the facilitator of the Detroit Bi, Trans, Lesbian, Gay and Queer Anti-Violence Collaborative, formally known as the Michigan Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian, Gay and Queer Survivors of Abuse (MI Network). The appointed facilitator is Jacqulyn Hippe, community advocate and counselor of LGBT Detroit's Healing and Support Services program.

"This Collaborative is an evolution of the MI Network to establish an intersectional and trauma-informed approach to advocacy for bi, trans, lesbian, gay, and queer people of color who are survivors of abuse," said Hippe.

The Collaborative brings together service providers from various community organizations, like Equality Michigan, WC SAFE, Affirmations, HAVEN, LaVIDA, Turning Point and First Step to uplift unheard voices and "invisible" identities, specifically LGBTQ people of color.

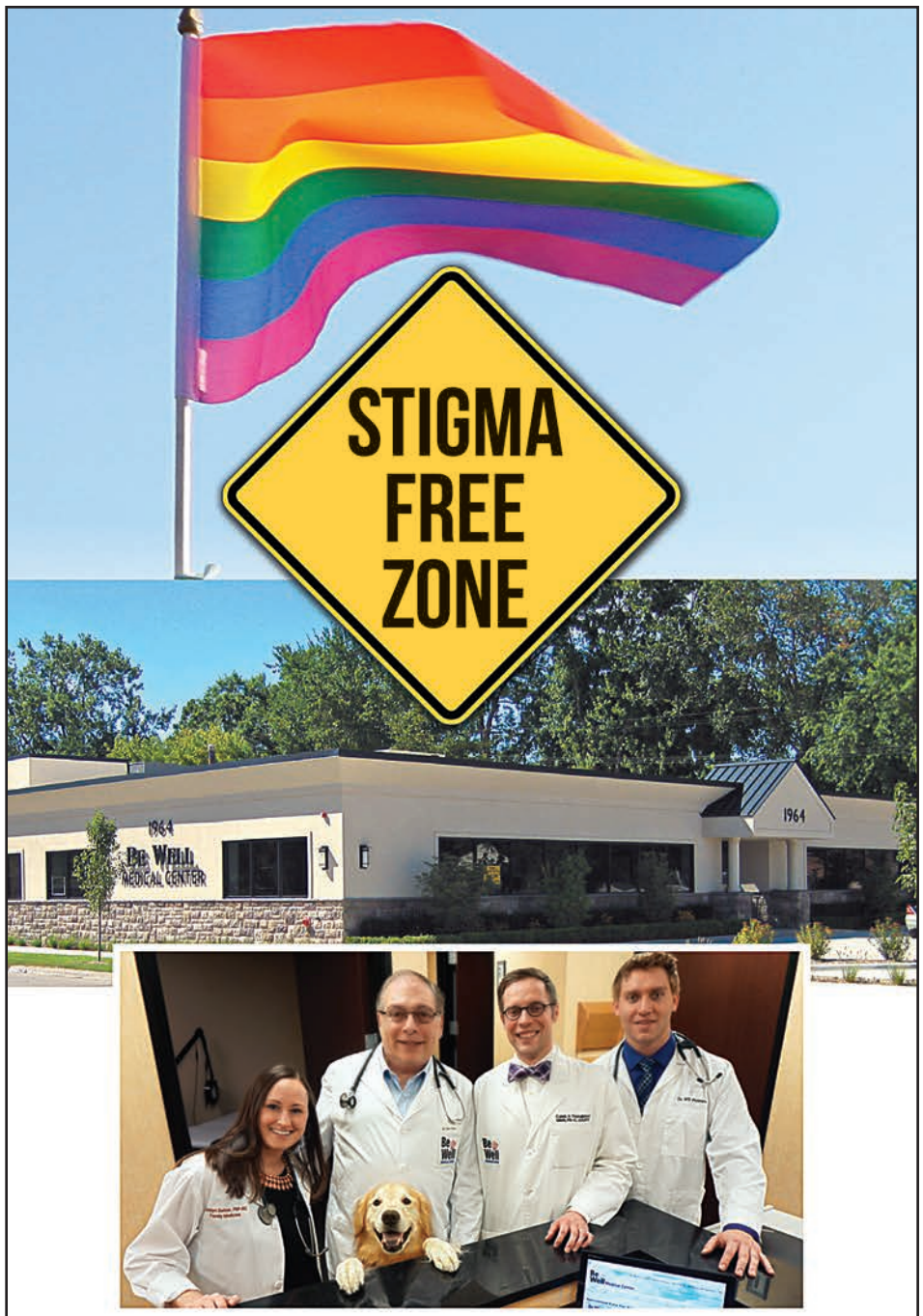
This work uses an intersectional lens to identify current gaps in services for survivors of violence within an urban context taking into account historical trauma and epigenetics. Additionally, it is an educational forum to identify the needs of diverse communities in the Metro-Detroit area by providing culturally specific/sensitive workshops and trainings for members of roundtable.

It is a space to collaborate on LGBTQ-specific assessment for services and a location to provide resource referrals. The main goal of the Collaborative is to promote LGBTQ POC leadership and support, and increase prevention education and training opportunities for community resources that service LGBTQ POC. The Collaborative meets every two months on the fourth Friday, beginning June 29.

The Macomb Community Domestic Violence Council is a founding organizer of the MI Network. The MI Network creates community and organizational change to respond to abuse and promote healthy relationships in LGBTQ communities. Affirmations, HAVEN, Equality Michigan and Turning Point are the founding organizers of the MI Network. As a survivor centered movement promoting healthy relationships, they offer a gender robust approach to responding to and preventing LGBTQ+ partner abuse and sexual violence that is centered on self-determination and anti-oppression values. They work in solidarity with the NW Network and The Network/La Red.

For the last seven years, MI Network has responded to abuse by providing training and technical assistance to domestic and sexual violence organizations on LGBTQ abuse. Additionally, the organization has engaged LGBTQ communities in discussions around community accountability and responses to survivors. The Collaborative prevents abuse by facilitating relationship skills classes for LGBTQ communities, and by connecting people who share these values and goals with each other through the MI Network Roundtable, a group of service providers dedicated to learning more about LGBTQ abuse.

For more information about the Collaborative, please contact Jacqulyn Hippe at 313-397-2127.



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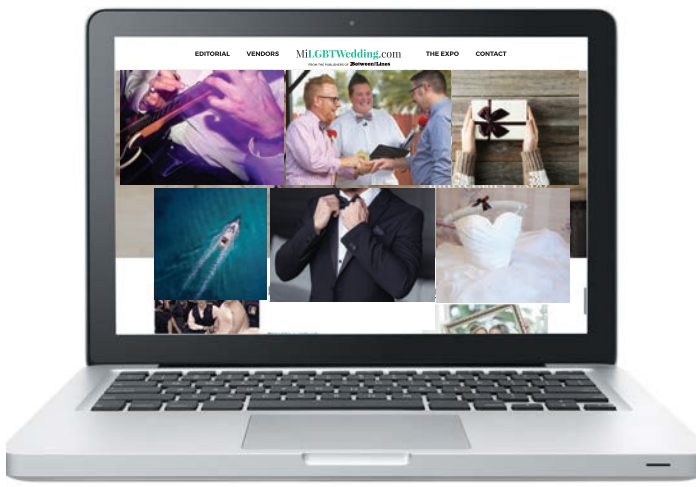

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